

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

OCTOBER 27, 2009

REVISED: Proclaim October 30, 2009 as America I AM Day

From October 30, 2009 through April 15, 2010, the California State African American Museum in Exposition Park will host America I AM: The African American Imprint traveling exhibit. Los Angeles is the third stop in a 10-city tour, following Philadelphia and Atlanta, and the exhibit will continue to travel across the United States over the next four years.

America I AM is an interactive multi-media experience which chronicles the 500-year journey of the African Americans from struggle to triumph through rare artifacts, memorabilia, documents, photos and music. Notable artifacts include the doors to the Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, Alex Hailey's typewriter used to write Roots, and personal effects of Malcolm X, to name a few.

The exhibit also encompasses an educational component developed by noted educators which responds in part to a question asked by W.E.B. Du Bois in 1903 "Would America have been America without her Negro people?" Lesson plans, supplemental activities, and an extensive bibliography are included in a teacher's guide, which is available online at www.americiam.org.

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America I AM is the brainchild of Tavis Smiley, a broadcaster, author, advocate and philanthropist. Through his activities, Tavis Smiley continues to be a voice for change, and in 2009, was named by Time Magazine as one of the World's 100 Most Influential People.

It is anticipated that in Los Angeles alone, America I AM will touch and influence over one million visitors and school children. The exhibit endeavors to bring together people of all culture, ages, and backgrounds, and all residents of and visitors to Los Angeles County should be encouraged to visit the exhibit.

THEREFORE, I MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Proclaim October 30, 2009 as America I AM Day in Los Angeles County;

Direct the Auditor Controller to include a message in the County paycheck or warrant for the last pay period in January or the first pay period in February to encourage County employees to visit the exhibit during African American heritage month in February:

Encourage all residents of, and visitors to Los Angeles to visit the America I AM exhibit at the California Science Center in Exposition Park, from October 30, 2009 to April 15, 2010; and

Encourage educators to visit the website www.americaiam.org to access lesson plans which would be helpful in teaching our youth about the contributions and accomplishments of African Americans to this great country.

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